

Garth's Very, Very BAD Day

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Summary: Ever have "one of *those* days"?? Not like this, you haven't!::))

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SPIFFY DISCLAIMER THINGIE!

Ah don't own him (more's the pity!) DC does! But if'n ya'll sue moi Garth is gonna cry real hard::)) And if'n anybody can figure out how Ah can make money doin' this, for God's sake speak up now!

Rated G for absolute purity of content: No ex, no drugs, and ABSOLUTELY no Rock and Roll! *snarf* *Dannell waves cheerily at Ed (or was it Tony?) and Syl*

Also rated F for Funnybone::))

This thing has NO continuity whatsofreakingever so don't ya'll be looking for it, heah? Ah apologize in advance to anybody living in the New York area for no doubt totally slaughtering the geography of the Big Apple!

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"What do you mean, my pool is condemned?" asked Tempest politely

"Look buddy, don't blame me!" the City Health Official snapped garrulously. Gritting his teeth, he thrust his clipboard and it's official looking papers under the young hero's nose. "I just deliver the paperwork is all! Sign here!" Obediently, the Atlantean youth took the proffered pen and signed on the dotted line. Satisfied, the burly health official gestured several men forward and Garth sighed in distress as he watched them cordon off his home away from home with ominous looking yellow plastic tape adorned with black symbolic skull and crossbones then erect several CONDEMNED signs for good measure.

"Sorry kid," the official said, not unkindly, "I know it's a pisser, but the law's the law."

Garth blinked wide purple eyes in confusion.

"What laws?" he inquired. "I don't understand."

"Public health laws buddy!" the larger man informed him with a wave of his hand. "If you're gonna have a backyard swimming pool ya gotta make sure its clean and safe. That's the law."

"But - "

"No buts about it, kid!" the other sniffed. "If the ph of the water is too high or too low it ain't safe to use. Period." He pointed to the pool. "Damned thing has enough salt in the water to pickle a frigging cucumber!" He shook his head at the hideous danger of such a thing. "Somebody could fall in there and really, really hurt their eyes or something."

"It's a sea water pool," the ocean born Titan pointed out, dryly. "It's *supposed* to have a lot of salt in it. That's why it's a *sea* water pool."

"Yeah, well take it up with City Hall, kid," the heavyset man brushed the slight youth's protests aside. Frowning, he reached to tear off Garth's pink copy of the quadruple document. Garth gazed at the paper in dismay. It was, of course, completely illegible even to his sharp Atlantean eyes used to the black depths of the sea.

"Hey! Wait a minute!" the beefy worker suddenly cried, staring at his copy for the first time. "What is this? What're you trying to pull here?" Blunt fingers stabbed at the bottom of the document bearing the line with the neatly flowing signature of the owner of the aforementioned condemned pool. "What the hell is *this*?" he demanded through narrowed eyes, bringing his angry face within inches of the startled Garth's.

"My name?" supplied the bewildered Atlantean hero, helpfully.

"What the hell kinda name is 'Garth', anyway," the man's belligerent snarl rumbled forth as he eyed the younger man suspiciously. "Garth WHAT?" he tapped his impatient foot, waiting. "Ain't you got a last name?" Again, Garth blinked those strange purple eyes at him.

"Well, no, actually ..." he began. The man cut him off with a rude gesture.

"Don't make no difference," he warned in a grim voice. "Ain't *nobody* goin' in that pool until you drain it, clean it and take the salt out!" With a gesture of finality, he snatched the pink paper from Garth's hands, carefully rolled it up, inserted it in the elastic waist band of Garth's swim trucks and snapped the band closed.

"Welcome to New York," he smiled. "Have a nice day!" Waving to a skinny mop haired man, the official yelled, "Yo Paulie! Move yer butt! We got bidniz to take care of, ya know?"

Sadly, the beleaguered former Aqualad watched the busy men depart. This living on land was more complex than it first appeared, apparently. Perhaps he should rethink his decision to give it a try? No, he told himself resolutely, it just take getting used to is all. With a loud sigh he eyed the off limits pool and considered his sleeping options for the foreseeable future. It looked like the bathtub for him. Again. It was either that or the Jacuzzi. And the bubbles made him sneeze. Oh well, that was a problem for another day.

"Sir?" inquired Carruthers, his newly hired valet. "Will you be dining by the pool again?"

His perfectly modulated British voice was a careful ruse. His present employer didn't know that, of course. Andrew Tonetelli had never been close to England than his hometown of Hackensack, New Jersey. But rich people like this clueless kid paid big bucks for an English accent. And who was he to disappoint them?

"About the menu, sir ... " began the psuedo-Brit in an uneasy tone, clearing his throat delicately for emphasis. As Garth seated himself at the pool side table, Carruthers uncovered the dish on the mobile tray and sniffed boisterously. The undersea mage frowned. Something about the smell was very familiar ...

"I'm afraid that the chef was unable to obtain kelp or seaweed on such notice, sir," Carruthers apologized, "but he was able to prepare this delicious bouillabaisse for you! Just full of seafood!" With deep trepidation, Garth eyed the small, white chunks floating elegantly in the thick, creamy stew.

"What are these?" he asked, nervously.

"Dolphin!" proclaimed a triumphant Carruthers, beaming from ear to ear. "It's very difficult to find it fresh, you know! Your chef, Pierre is justly proud of himself!"

Suddenly nauseous, Garth heaved himself away from the table, upsetting the steaming soup tureen. "Oh dear!" cried Carruthers

"Damned clumsy kid!" he thought to himself, hurrying to clean up the mess. "You'd think he wasn't used to eating Dolphin!" he snickered. He didn't much like his new employer's permanent house guest but he had to admit she was a looker. Now, if only she could avoid leaving a trail of water in her wake wherever she went ... Some people just had *no* consideration, damnit.

Garth's first instinct was to dive into the pool to soothe his rapidly fraying nerves and calm his queasy stomach. But no, he reminded himself sternly. The pool was off limits. What to do? When the answer hit him he smiled.

The nearest beach, it turned out, was quite some distance away; all the way across the City, in fact. But Garth persevered. And he almost made it. But three hours later, stuck in rush hour traffic and slowly dehydrating the Atlantean grew desperate.

"Not on my beat, ya loon!" cried the exasperated NYC policeman who

hauled him down off the suspension cables of the Vincenzo-Narrows bridge before he could jump into the cool inviting water below. "You wanna oft yourself, no problem! But do it in Jersey for Christ sake! Not here!"

Meekly, the increasingly desperate water-breather re-entered his chauffeured limo and croaked, "The beach!"

"Very good, sir," agreed Carruthers and continued on their way. Another hour and three bottles of Dom Perignon later, the valet cum chauffeur pulled the Mercedes limo to a halt just shy of the beach at Cony Island.

"More champagne, sir?" he inquired, handing the youth a flute of the pale wine of France's most famous winemaking province.

"Thank you," murmured a grateful Garth and poured it over his head.

"Damn strange guy," Carruthers thought as he watched the young man run for the beach. "All that tight spandex cuts off the air supply to the brain, I guess." He settled back with his own glass of champagne. "Not my problem, though."

Stumbling through the sand in desperation, Garth was horrified to be greeted by more ominous yellow plastic tape at the edge of the sandy shore. He was really growing quite tired of the color yellow recently.

"Get away from there!" shouted a swim suited young man almost as young as Garth himself busily engaged in pounding a large yellow "NO SWIMMING" sign into the wet sand.

"Water!" cried Garth, hoarsely. "I need water!"

"Not here, you don't pal," the other man assured him. He waved a frightened hand in the direction of the the sparkling ocean. "Sharks, man! A twelve footer spotted off Montauk Point yesterday! Swallow you whole dude!" Blinking, Garth mournfully recalled the hundred foot carcharodon carcharodon that was one of his happier childhood playmates. Smiley had been great company, actually.

"Twelve feet?" Garth pleaded, "is that al - "

"Maybe fifteen !" exclaimed the beach guard, wide eyed, ignoring shy Garth. "No swimming allowed here until they catch it!"

"Where - where can I find a beach to swim at?" Garth asked, trying to be reasonable.

"Lemme see," the other contemplated. Rubbing his tanned chin, the young man in the fuchsia swim trunks adorned with lime green seashells gazed thoughtfully into the distance. His face brightened for an instant and then fell once again into long lines of mournful sorrow.

"Nope," he temporized, "that won't do. Grunion infestation." He shook his head ruefully. "Since that oil tanker ran aground in Gotham harbor last week, the whole East Coast is pretty much a write off beach-wise," he complained. After a moment he brightened again.

"Try the Pacific Coast," he advised sagely. "I'm thinking of moving to California, myself. But then, there's earthquakes in California. At least we don't have anything like that around here. Like the Banzai dude said, 'Wherever you go ... There you are.' It looks like you're pretty much hosed. Location-wise, that is."

Spitting several vociferous Atlantean curses now, Garth raced back to the waiting Mercedes. "Home!" he cried. The bathtub was beginning to look better and better all the time. Even stopping only once for more champagne, it took them another hour and a half before they pulled into the circular drive of Garth's new home.

Once inside, Garth gratefully filled the large sunken tub and breathed a sigh of relief. This was going to feel soooo good. Only one more crowning touch and then the relaxing water would be *perfect* ...

"I'm sorry to say, sir," Carruthers informed him, his voice at once droll and a bit nervous, "that we seem to be all out of sea salt. Pierre used the last of it in the bouillabaisse, I'm afraid ... "

At this point, Garth was too dehydrated to cry.

Silently, he slipped into the tepid water and tried to relax, remembering the lessons that his sorcerous mentor Atlan had taught him. Carruthers cleared his throat rather pointedly for his young employers attention. Leaping lamprey's, thought Garth in dismay, what NOW?

"A note from Miss Dolphin, sir," explained the servant in his best, most impressive imitation of Prince Charles at his snottiest. Perfectly calm, he handed the young Atlantean the terse note from his mysterious undersea lover.

"Dear Garth," it read.

"There's been another revolution in Atlantis and Arthur is back on the throne. So, I'm off to make amends and take my rightful place at his side. It's been fun, kiddo!

Dolphin

P.S. It's good to be the Queen."

Covering his face in despair, the Titan sank completely under the water, air bubbles rapidly raising to the surface of the stale water in his wake.

He did not, of course, drown.

Unfortunately.

The End!

End
file.